




College of Letters & Science
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Date: March 16, 2022
To: L&S Chairs and Department Administrators
L&S 131 Program Administrators
From: Eric M. Wilcots, L&S Dean 

Re: New campus policy for employment of students in 131 programs

Campus is adopting new policy regarding employment of students enrolled in academic programs with service-based pricing (i.e., 131 programs). The policy (UW-1029) is posted in the [campus policy library](#) and will take effect on May 15, 2022.

In the past, 131 students who held TA/RA/PA positions with appointments of 33% or higher were eligible for tuition remission. This resulted in loss of tuition revenue to the student's program, and threatened to undermine the financial viability of some programs given the requirement for them to be entirely self-supporting. To address this situation, the College prohibited departments from hiring 131 students from other departments for spring 2022.

Under the new policy, 131 students are permitted to hold TA/RA/PA positions (including those above 33%) but will not receive the tuition remission that is typically part of the compensation package for a graduate assistantship. The Bursar's Office will implement the new policy by mechanically preventing tuition remission to 131 students. The new policy has important implications for both 131 programs and departments that may hire 131 students:

131 programs. Following past College guidance, most L&S 131 programs currently prohibit their students from accepting any campus employment that would trigger tuition remission. Potentially, some programs may wish to continue to discourage campus employment given the accelerated nature of the curriculum. However, under the new policy, programs will no longer need to restrict employment solely to avoid loss of tuition revenue. To the extent that any program continues to discourage campus employment, the program is responsible for monitoring and enforcement of its rules or guidelines.

The Graduate School will update Guide pages with uniform language indicating that 131 students are not eligible for tuition remission. Programs should clearly communicate this new policy to students, updating all program materials as necessary. This includes the offer of admission, the program website, the program handbook, and during program orientation.

Hiring departments. In light of the new policy, the College will no longer prohibit departments from hiring 131 students. The new [data visualization](#) to help identify 131 students will remain available, but departments will not be required to consult it before making TA/RA/PA hires.

Given graduate funding guarantees, we expect L&S departments will continue to prioritize their traditional graduate students for assistantships. Departments unable to hire a sufficient number of TAs from among their traditional students could contact L&S Associate Dean [Shirin Malekpour](#) to discuss the use of undergraduate assistants or 131 students in this role.

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